

## **OPERATIONS BULLETIN # 38**

***Subject: Use of Cal EMA Water Tenders***

The purpose of this bulletin is to outline the basic procedures for the operations of Cal EMA Fire Service Water Tenders. Review Fire and Rescue Division Operations Bulletin #7, "Use of Cal EMA Fire and Rescue Apparatus Major Mutual Aid Emergencies" (rev 4/02) for additional applicable information

### **OVERVIEW**

Water Tenders are specially designed water trucks built to provide water for fire fighting purposes. Water tenders are frequently used in rural and urban/interface areas. These areas often lack sufficient water system infrastructure to adequately support fire engine operations during emergency activities. Cal EMA, and other fire service water tenders are not the same as conventional water trucks, such as those used by road departments and construction companies. Cal EMA Water Tenders are built with a 500 GPM PTO pump, Class A Foam System, 2000 gallon stainless steel tank, specially designed tool compartments, appropriate tool inventory, communication system, a 10" rear quick dump, warning and scene lights, built-in SCBA tubes, etc.

### **APPROPRIATE USES OF Cal EMA WATER TENDERS**

Fire Service Water Tenders play an important all-risk, civil defense and general disaster mitigation role. Not only are water tenders necessary in support of firefighting operations in rural wildland environments, they also support other critical fire suppression needs of incidents requiring a portable or enhanced water supply. Examples would include dump fires, hay fires, etc. Other public safety incidents involving non-fire emergencies include providing urgently needed water supplies (non-potable) following earthquakes and floods as well as in providing hazardous materials personnel/equipment decontamination, etc.

### **INAPPROPRIATE USES OF Cal EMA WATER TENDERS**

As previously indicated Cal EMA Water Tenders are designed specifically for fire service applications. They are not to be used for standard water truck assignments, such as road watering, supplying Incident Base shower units, etc. Conventional water trucks should be used in these types of situations to leave the Cal EMA Water Tenders available for emergency use through the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System.

### **STAFFING**

The Water Tender will be staffed with two qualified driver/operators whenever the apparatus is dispatched. It is reasonable to assume that Cal EMA Water Tenders will receive frequent, multi-day assignments away from their home quarters. Replacement or rotation of personnel will be coordinated by Cal EMA, using guidelines outlined in appropriate existing Inter-agency Agreements.

State of California  
**CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**  
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**DISPATCHING**

All movement of Cal EMA Water Tenders will be through the official dispatching channels. Dispatchers will recognize and act on all official requests for movement of the apparatus in conformance with the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System.

Cal EMA Water Tenders will be dispatched as single increments. They are not to be substituted for an engine. They are not meant as a replacement initial attack unit. Cal EMA Engine Strike Teams will continue to be dispatched meeting ICS Strike Team standards. During periods of drawdown of Cal EMA apparatus, Cal EMA Task Forces may be put together for response, by combining any remaining Cal EMA units (both engines and water tenders) into an established ICS Task Force configuration. Generally the Cal EMA Task Force will only be considered when there are insufficient engines available to make a Cal EMA Strike Team.

The water tender driver/operator(s) will be responsible to have all necessary dispatch information, including order and request numbers, destination, travel route, radio frequencies, and all other identified points of contact, etc., prior to responding.